(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the agreement ensures improved market access to countries across the world; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As an obligation under the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), the Government has designated the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) as its TBT related National Enquiry Point. BIS, as the National Enquiry Point, answers all the relevant enquiries from the Enquiry Points of other countries pertaining to technical regulations, standards and conformity assessment procedures adopted or proposed to be adopted within the country. BIS also disseminates the TBT Notifications of other WTO members bodies to the national stakeholders. It also functions as an information centre within the country.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The TBT Agreement does not allow WTO Members to adopt any TBT related measures which create unnecessary trade barriers. IF any regulation causes unnecessary trade barriers to our exports abroad, the same are addressed appropriately through bilateral or multilateral mode by the Government.

Public prosecutors

2625. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to provide for a network of public prosecutors to assist the poor and lower middle class consumers seeking to file complaints under the Consumer Protection Act;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government have any other plan to assist this category of consumers in view of the technicalities involved in various consumers products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 prescribes a simple procedure for redressal of consumer disputes taking into account the fact that the complainant is an average consumer. Since only the principles of natural justice and summary trials are to be adoped by the consumer fora in disposal of complaints, the complainants is neither required to engage a legal practitioner nor is it obligatory under the Act. However, in order to assist complainants, who are poor, the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) appoints *Amicus Curiae,* whenever considered necessary.

Black marketing

†2626. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the steps being taken by Government to check black marketing of vegetables and fruits (particularly onions) in the country;

(b) whether people of the country are suffering due to black marketing and farmers are not getting their due profits and common man has to pay double or triple price while purchasing fruits and vegetables; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (c) The Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 is being implemented by the State Governments/Union Territory (UT) Administrations. The Act empowers the Central and State Governments to detain persons whose activities-are found to be prejudicial to the maintenance of supplies of commodities essential to the community.

Onion which was declared as essential commodity *vide* Notification dated 29th June, 1999 has since been deleted from the list of the essential commodities *vide* Notification dated 25th November, 2004.

No reports regarding Black-marketing of vegetables and fruits (particularly onions) have been received from any State Governments/UT

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.